

How to Stop Child Abuse in a Public Place

It can be very uncomfortable to watch the mistreatment of a child by an adult out of control. Fortunately, there are things you can do to help...

- Strike up a conversation with the adult to direct attention away from the child. Say something like:

“She seems to be trying your patience.”

“My child has gotten upset like that, too.”

“He has beautiful (eyes).”

This may help the parent get in a positive mood.

“Children can wear you out, can’t they? Is there anything I can do to help?”

- Divert the child’s attention (if misbehaving) by talking to the child.
- Praise the child and parent at the first opportunity.
- If the child is in danger, offer assistance. For example, if the child is left unattended in a grocery cart, stand by the child until the parent returns.
- Avoid negative remarks or looks. These reactions are likely to increase the parent’s anger and could make matters worse

Provided by the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse, 332 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 1600, Chicago, IL 60604, (312) 663-3520, <http://www.childabuse.org>

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